

South Oxfordshire Local Plan

Preferred Options Consultation Report

March 2017



Listening Learning Leading

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

- 1.1. South Oxfordshire District Council is continuing work on a new local plan: the emerging Local Plan can be found on this link: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/localplan> . This document will set out a vision and framework for the future development of South Oxfordshire.
- 1.2. Community engagement is a valuable tool within the plan production process. The information and opinions provided to us at each round of public consultation are used to refine and improve the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.3. In June 2016 we began our third stage of consultation in the preparation of the emerging Local Plan: the Preferred Options Consultation. This consultation was held over a period of eight weeks within which we asked consultees to provide us their views on a number of questions within the [Preferred Options Consultation Document](#). This document reports the result we received to this consultation.

Next steps

- 1.4. The views and information submitted through the Preferred Options Consultation will be used alongside [evidence studies](#) to reform the vision and strategy put forward and prepare a Proposed Submission Document. This document is effectively a “draft local plan”.
- 1.5. Once we have prepared a Proposed Submission Document we will hold a further public consultation period. This will allow formal representations to be made in response to the Proposed Submission Document by any interested individual or group. Responses to this stage of the plan will need to indicate whether the plan is considered to be ‘sound’ and/or legally compliant. A ‘sound’ local plan is one which a local planning authority considers to be:
 - Positively prepared
 - Justified
 - Effective, and
 - Consistent with national policy

INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A wide range of individuals and groups have an interest in the future development of South Oxfordshire. At each consultation stage in the production of the emerging Local Plan we aim to engage as many of these people as possible. This is because we recognise the importance and value of community engagement throughout the plan production process. The comments received

during each round of consultation are used to inform and refine the creation of the emerging Local Plan.

- 2.2 In June 2016 we published our [Preferred Options Consultation Document](#) and held an eight week public consultation period from Monday 27 June 2016 to Friday 19 August 2016.
- 2.3 This report documents the Preferred Options Consultation and provides summaries and highlights key points from the comments submitted. A spreadsheet containing all of the comments submitted to the consultation can be downloaded from our website <https://consult.southoxfordshire.gov.uk/portal/south/planning/pol/poj2016/poj2016>

BACKGROUND

- 3.1 South Oxfordshire District Council is currently preparing a new local plan called the Local Plan 2033¹. This is to account for the increased housing need in South Oxfordshire identified by the [Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) (SHMA), and also to accommodate some of Oxford City's housing need, which they don't have enough space to provide for.
- 3.2 The emerging Local sets out a vision and framework for the future development of South Oxfordshire. Once adopted, the plan will be a statutory document and a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 3.3 Throughout the process of developing the Local Plan it is essential that we seek the opinions of people and groups with an interest in South Oxfordshire, particularly residents, businesses and local communities.
- 3.4 The first stage of consultation for the emerging Local Plan was the [Issues and Scope Consultation](#) beginning in June 2014. This received almost 4,000 comments from about 800 individuals and organisations.
- 3.5 The second consultation stage was the [Refined Options Consultation](#) starting in February 2015. We received over 3,200 responses in this consultation from 750 individuals and organisations.
- 3.6 The [Preferred Options Consultation Document](#) consultation period was our third round of consultation in developing the Local Plan.



¹ Details of the work program and timetables for the production of development plan documents can be found in our [Local Development Scheme](#).

HOW WE CONSULTED

- 4.1 The Preferred Options Consultation took place over an eight week period beginning on Monday 27 June 2016 and closing on Friday 19 August 2016.
- 4.2 As with every consultation for the emerging Local Plan, we aim to reach and engage with as much of our community as possible. To ensure that we engaged with a wide range of individuals and groups interested in the future of South Oxfordshire we used a variety of consultation approaches, these can be found summarised in table 1. The methods used exceeded the statutory consultation requirements for this stage of consultation.

Table 1: Consultation methods used in the Preferred Options Consultation.

Statutory consultation methods used	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal press adverts to trigger start of consultation, • information being promoted on council's website², • letters and emails notification to statutory consultees, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letters and emails to non-statutory consultees on our database, and • hard copy documents and information available at a number of convenient locations across the district³.
Non-statutory consultation methods used	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • press release to local media outlets, • Twitter feeds – promoting the consultation, • parish newsletter articles – to promote consultation within local parish the consultation was published in Outlook and delivered to all households, • newsletters, • internal articles in council's newsletter in focus, • consultation portal/online survey – using consultation system to improve responding options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • councillor workshops for member involvement, • staff workshops for staff involvement, • two town, parish and neighbourhood planning group briefings – to assist • dialogue with local communities, • public events held in all towns and larger villages, • and consultation posters/leaflets – with assisted distribution through town and parish councils to promote consultation. • Consultation banners – distributed at council offices, libraries and one stop shops and leisure centres under district council control, to help promote consultation

² Appendix 1 contains a copy of the information shown on the council website during the Preferred Options Consultation.

³ During the consultation period, paper copies of the Preferred Options document were available at the following locations: the council's offices (135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB), all libraries across the district, Abbey Sports Centre in Berinsfield (reception), Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot, Culham Science Centre (reception), and Didcot Wave Leisure Pool and Gym (reception).

Public consultation events

4.3 As noted in table 1 above, a series of public consultation events were held across the district. Consultation documents and information boards⁴ were available to view at these events, and council officers were present to answer questions and record feedback. Public events were at the following locations:

- Benson – Monday 11 July 3-7pm, Benson Parish Hall (The Lounge), Sunnyside, Benson, OX10 6LZ
- Berinsfield - Monday 18 July 3-7pm, Berinsfield Pavilion, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield OX10 7NX
- Chalgrove – Friday 8 July 3-7pm, Chalgrove Village Hall, Baronshurst Drive, Chalgrove, OX44 7TE
- Chinnor - Tuesday 12 July 3-7pm, Chinnor Village Hall, Church Road, Chinnor, OX39 4PQ
- Cholsey - Tuesday 28 June 2.30-6.30pm, Cholsey Pavilion Station Road, Cholsey, Wallingford, OX10 9PT
- Crowmarsh Gifford - Friday 15 July 3-7pm, Crowmarsh Village Hall, 6 Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford, OX10 8ED
- Didcot - Saturday 16 July 11-3pm, Cornerstone Arts Centre (Flint Room), 25 Station Rd, Didcot OX11 7NE
- Goring-on-Thames - Wednesday 29 June 3-7pm, Goring-on-Thames Village Hall, High Street, Goring-on-Thames, RG8 9AG
- Henley-on-Thames - Saturday 23 July 11-3pm, d:Two Centre, 55-57 Market Place, Henley, RG9 2AA
- Nettlebed - Friday 1 July 3-7pm, Nettlebed Village Club, High St, Nettlebed, RG9 5DD
- Sonning Common - Monday 4 July 3-7pm, Sonning Common Village Hall, Wood Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9SL
- Thame - Saturday 2 July 11-3pm, Thame Town Hall, High St, Thame OX9 3DP
- Wallingford - Saturday 9 July 11-3pm, The George Hotel, High St, Wallingford OX10 0BS
- Watlington - Tuesday 5 July 2.30-6.30pm, The Watlington Club, 20 High St, Watlington, OX49 5PY
- Wheatley - Wednesday 13 July 3-7pm, Merry Bells Village Hall, Wheatley, OX33 1XP
- Woodcote – Thursday 21 July 3-7pm, Woodcote Village Hall, Reading Road, Woodcote, RG8 0QY

4.4 We encouraged consultees to respond to the questions within the Preferred Options Consultation Document via our online consultation system⁵, as this is the most efficient way to submit comments. Responses could also be submitted in respect of the Preferred Options Consultation via email and post.

⁴ The information boards used at the public consultation events can be found in appendix 2.

⁵ The consultation system used at this time to record comments was provided by [Objective](#).

RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION

There were 7988 individual comments from 1371 respondents in total.

RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Question 1 - Is this the correct strategy to deliver the objectives for our district to 2032?

1. Respondents have mainly identified their concerns with the changes the emerging Local Plan would bring, but have also added their own ideas, such as focusing on building on, or near to Green Belt land. This includes employment and infrastructure to be implemented nearer to Oxford, as many have expressed the view that development should take place near an already expanding city and not in rural areas.
2. A key concern is that the existing infrastructure at Chalgrove cannot support the proposed 3,500 houses with an estimated 7000+ cars. A consequence of this would be an increase in congestion on country roads. Repeated statements have been raised at the Chalgrove Parish meeting as residents do not feel safe walking given many roads do not have pavements. More respondents quoted the South Oxfordshire local plan objectives saying that the new strategy goes against these. The same issue was raised in respect of Harrington.
3. In relation to point 2, respondents wanted to see more housing and employment opportunities in Didcot and Science Vale as the view is expansion should take place in the larger towns rather than in rural villages. This was also suggested for the creation of business parks as creating them in rural areas would be more hazardous on the roads due to the increase in the number of HGVs. Many respondents did say however they would like to see more employment and housing development happen but not in the sites that South Oxfordshire has allocated in the Local Plan 2032. The main theme from question 1 is to build less in the rural villages.
4. Further comments relating to development at Chalgrove's raise the preservation of its heritage as an issue to be considered. This refers to the 'Battle of Chalgrove' and also to the RAF base which is currently situated there. Other environmental concerns were raised, such as pollution in the form of CO2, light and noise, affecting the existing residents. The 2014 flood in Chalgrove caused a lot of respondents to raise concerns about history repeating itself if the new 3,500 homes were built.
5. More or less the same comments as Chalgrove were raised in respect of Harrington when it comes to environmental concerns, traffic congestion (affecting the M40 and surrounding local communities). Similar comments about pollution and flood concerns were also raised. Concerns were raised about the cost of buying a property in the new developments as it was felt that local people may not be able to afford them, but that they would be used by commuters to London and Oxford, further increasing congestion on country roads.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

A key part of the evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. The ETI provides a robust and credible evidence base upon which the soundness of the emerging Local Plan can be assessed. The ETI is an iterative process to understand the impacts of development on the transport network which will continue to be developed as the Local plan progresses. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The potential to develop on Green Belt and/or the potential to remove land from the Green Belt is being considered through the Local Plan process.

The distribution of development in the District has been considered and consulted upon with different options being put forward. It is recognised that there is no single one solution to where development should go, and as such a hybrid of options are being considered at the Preferred Options stage. All of these options have been fully appraised through the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Development at Didcot and the Science Vale does provide a major focus for new development in the Plan period, recognising the particular contribution that this area can play in town centre improvements, homes, jobs and services with improved connectivity.

We are keen to ensure that development does take place in our larger villages which reflects the level of services/facilities and their rural hinterland which looks to them for key services. The spatial distribution of our existing towns towards the periphery of the administrative area strengthens the role which our villages need to play. Directing some development towards these areas is considered an appropriate part of the overall strategy.

The historic battlefield of Chalgrove will be protected from development and the impact of development on heritage assets will be appraised through the Plan process.

Issues such as pollution will be considered and tested through the plan process, including the cumulative impacts of proposed development.

To support and inform the plan and its identification of sites, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been produced to cover the entire administrative area of South Oxfordshire. Flooding is a serious issue and to this end we have commissioned additional, more detailed flood assessment work.

We recognise that the District does have an affordability issue, which may to a small extent be stemming from a lack of supply. We expect all residential development on sites which have 11 dwellings or more to provide on site affordable housing. The issue of where people choose to commute is one which we can influence but not control.

Question 2 - Are there any improvements that you can suggest for the strategy?

There were 114 responses, with 24 (21.05%) agreeing, that improvements could be made or that they agreed with the strategy, 90 (78.95%) not agreeing and 431 no responses

There was a low response rate to this question and no one single issue stood out. There were some salient points and these are as follows:

1. There was concern that infrastructure would not keep pace with the development and that unnecessary strain would be put onto transport links.
2. There was a feeling that the potential strategy would destroy existing communities and that other sites, specifically Grenoble Road, should be developed instead.
3. It was felt that existing villages should be grown and enhanced and that the strategy does not meet SODC's objective of maintaining existing rural communities.
4. There was a feeling that affordable housing, housing association housing and housing for the elderly should be given more emphasis. Some respondents felt that there could be improvements, but offered no suggestions

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan in place to support the Local Plan which considers the different types and levels of infrastructure which will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The proposed strategic and site allocations are planned to provide make a positive contribution to communities. New development can help to strengthen existing services and also to provide new infrastructure. It is considered that the emerging strategy would support rather than destroy existing communities.

The distribution of development in the District has been considered and consulted upon with different options being put forward. It is recognised that there is no single

one solution to where development should go, and as such a hybrid of options are being considered at the Preferred Options stage. All of these options have been fully appraised through the Sustainability Appraisal process.

We recognise that the District does have an affordability issue, which may to a small extent be stemming from a lack of supply. We expect all residential development on sites which have 11 dwellings or more to provide on site affordable housing. The emerging plan will respond to the requirements for different types of housing, including the elderly.

Question 3 - Do you agree with the overall level of housing provision proposed?

1. The majority of respondents consider SODC should reassess the SHMA because of Brexit, as it was commented that the district may not be economically stable enough to deliver the housing numbers. The opinion also seems to be SODC needs to lower the housing number as the UK economic outlook has changed.
2. Again from previous questions respondents have highlighted SODCs 2032 objectives saying that the new strategy goes against what was stated in terms of protecting the rural communities, infrastructure and pollution. However the main concern is the housing numbers we have included in the plan. People are frustrated about these, feeling that they are too high.
3. Many respondents have mentioned that we need to supply more affordable housing to first time buyers as the current market price for houses is too high.
4. A common concern is that SODC should, before building new homes ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place to sustain the new household's cars.
5. A majority of respondents have concerns over the housing number in Chalgrove, feeling that it is excessive to be putting 3,500 homes near an already existing community.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

The SHMA is a County wide document which covers the whole of Oxfordshire and any review should be carried out at this level. The SHMA been supported at three Oxfordshire examinations is We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to consider the different types and levels of infrastructure will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts.

The full extent of the impact of Brexit is not yet known and as such trying to respond to it at this stage would be unwise. Such a response would be addressed through the

review of the SHMA and indeed reflected through DCLG household projections and ONS population estimates.

The strategy in the emerging plan needs to reflect the environmental, social and economic roles for which planning has responsibility. Ultimately a balance needs to be struck to deliver necessary growth. These themes are tested through the Sustainability Appraisal which is updated at each stage of plan making.

The Local Plan should plan to deliver the homes which our evidence base identifies as being necessary to meet existing and future housing need for both market and affordable housing. Our housing evidence demonstrates that the number of homes is in a range between 725-825 new homes a year. Ultimately the Local Plan will be independently tested by an Inspector appointed to us and one of the key issues will be to determine whether we are planning for sufficient development.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The location of development next to an existing community provides an opportunity to provide new services and infrastructure to the benefit of existing and future residents. It also helps support and strengthen the existing service provision on offer. The land at Chalgrove is a partially previously developed site, which is free from landscape, ecological, archaeological, flood or policy constraints. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), an arm of Government, owns the whole site (one owner) and offers greater public accountability, including access to potential funding. This provides confidence in securing a well planned development that can deliver the required infrastructure. An existing employment site lies adjacent to the proposed Chalgrove airfield site.

Question 4 - Do you agree with the proposed distribution of housing around the district?

- 1 The main concern is that the new development at Chalgrove is considered unsuitable as the existing infrastructure cannot support the volume of traffic that could potentially be on the roads. Many have suggested implementing new infrastructure to deal with the predicted number of vehicles. Others have commented with new infrastructure more needs to be done to external smaller villages so they can also cope with the higher volumes of traffic.
- 2 Again the main concern is the proposed housing numbers at Chalgrove. Many commented that the number is too high for the rural area and an existing community does not need such a large development in such close proximity.

- 3 The opinion on the Green Belt was split. On one side there are people who want Oxford's unmet need to be built in Oxford's Green Belt. On the other side are people who want the Green Belt protected but want Oxford's unmet need met somewhere other than the preferred sites.
- 4 Concerns were raised about the impact on the landscape. Many respondents raised concerns that pollution, including noise and light pollution, would be increased.
- 5 A large number of respondents felt that housing should be built nearer to where there is employment, so Culham or Didcot.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan in place to support the Local Plan which considers the different types and levels of infrastructure which will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The location of development next to an existing community provides an opportunity to provide new services and infrastructure to the benefit of existing and future residents. It also helps support and strengthen the existing service provision on offer. The land at Chalgrove is a partially previously developed site, which is free from landscape, ecological, archaeological, flood or policy constraints.

The potential to review Green Belt boundaries, where exceptional circumstances exist, through the Local Plan is an established principle. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, but may contribute towards the following purposes;

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Meeting housing need alone is not sufficient to justify the exceptional circumstances to take land out of the Green Belt.

Meeting some of the unmet needs of Oxford City could be met anywhere within the district and it is not the case that this is tied to any one location or site. To attempt to do so could limit the flexibility of the plan.

Impact on the landscape is assessed as part of the site selection process and is considered at an individual site basis to avoid landscape harm. The emerging Local Plan will also need to ensure that it contains appropriate policies relating to landscape to protect against harm from all development proposals.

The potential for light pollution, pollution and noise pollution is considered and appraised on a site basis and protected against by the inclusion of specific development management policies in the plan.

Whilst it is not within the gift of the plan to determine where people will work or will choose to live, we can propose to allocate housing sites close to existing employment opportunities and also ensure that allocations are mixed use. Development at Didcot will take place during the plan period – some 6,500 homes are proposed at this location.

Question 5 - Do you agree with our choice of Chalgrove Airfield as the preferred Strategic Allocation and if not, what changes do you suggest?

There were 2500 responses from 800 respondents

1. Just over 12 percent of the comments, raised concerns over the potential change to the village character of the existing settlement of Chalgrove, feeling that the development at the former airfield could urbanise the character of the village and would lead to a large increase in the population of the existing village and change the existing way of life, which many respondents suggested that they had moved to the village for. Comments were made that the development would create a village split in two by the B480 road.
2. Just over 11 percent of comments favour not developing the airfield but providing additional housing within the Green Belt around Oxford, with the current need for housing providing exceptional circumstances. It was suggested that the need for new housing was due to Oxford's unmet housing need and land at Grenoble Road within the Green Belt on the edge of Oxford would be a suitable site as there are more services and employment in Oxford. It was also commented that land at Culham Science Centre or near to it within the Green Belt would be more suitable. It was also felt that there are few jobs available in the Chalgrove area, meaning that most people would commute to Oxford, London, Didcot or the larger towns.
3. The provision of infrastructure was also raised, specifically the impact of additional traffic on Chalgrove and the surrounding villages and the provision of new roads causing an increase in traffic. Concerns were also raised that other infrastructure, such as schools, GP surgeries, shops and community facilities in

the existing community would not cope with the extra demand. The lack of public transport also caused concern as well as the lack of a railway station. Some respondents suggested that new infrastructure should be provided before any development starts.

4. While there were a number of comments (45) in favour of the development at the airfield, around the same number (50) comments raised concerns that concerns that the allocation of the former airfield for development would conflict with the Strategic Objectives of the current Core Strategy or the emerging Local Plan. There were also comments that the airfield was only a partially brownfield site, and that developing the green field element could have a negative impact on the environment or impact the surrounding countryside. Concerns were raised that the option of developing the former airfield was put forward at short notice with this option not being listed before in the “Refined Options” consultation or the “Issues and Options” consultation. There were also comments questioning how the housing need figures are calculated and disputed the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014) with several comments made over the future of the UK outside of the European Union and the need for more housing.
5. There were a large number of comments raising concerns over flood risk at the former airfield and that development of the airfield could exacerbate the potential for flooding at the existing village of Chalgrove.
6. Many comments, just over 60, relate to the historic significance of the battle between Royalists and Parliamentarians which took place in the area on the 18 June 1643 as part of the English Civil War. The site is a registered Battlefield.
7. Other concerns related to the Battlefield which is registered with Historic England, the impact of the potential development of the former airfield on the existing operations of the RAF airfield at Benson and the loss of, or impact on, Martin Baker Ltd who current occupy the site.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

The location of development next to an existing community provides an opportunity to provide new services and infrastructure to the benefit of existing and future residents. It also helps support and strengthen the existing service provision on offer. The land at Chalgrove is a partially previously developed site, which is free from landscape, ecological, archaeological, flood or policy constraints. It is not clear why those residents who had expressed that they had moved to the village to experience a village way of life were resisting that opportunity for others. The development of a strategic allocation would need to address the approach to the existing B road and the opportunity to provide a cohesive and connective community.

Meeting housing need alone is not sufficient to justify the exceptional circumstances to take land out of the Green Belt. Meeting some of the unmet needs of Oxford City could be met anywhere within the district and it is not the case that this is tied to any one location or site. To attempt to do so could limit the flexibility of the plan. The

potential for development at Culham is supported and this will be explored through the next stage of the Local Plan.

Whilst it is not within the gift of the plan to determine where people will work or will choose to live, we can propose to allocate housing sites close to existing employment opportunities and also ensure that allocations are mixed use.

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to consider the different types and levels of infrastructure will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The provision of infrastructure can be phased with the delivery of development.

It is not considered that development at Chalgrove would be in conflict with the adopted Core Strategy or Local Plan. Notwithstanding this comment, this emerging Local Plan will replace both of those documents on its adoption.

The emerging Local Plan has been subject to significant public consultation and opportunities for engagement and feedback. The next version of the Local Plan will be a further Preferred Options document, over and above the requirements set out in the Regulations which relate to plan making.

The SHMA represents the most up to date evidence base relating to housing needs.

A district wide Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken to assist with the Sequential Test approach to site selection. We are commissioning more detailed flood risk assessment work to support the emerging Local Plan.

It is recognised that the proposed strategic allocation is adjacent to the registered historic battlefield. There is existing built development on the battlefield, but we will work with Historic England to ensure that appropriate buffers are maintained. CAA guidelines require appropriate buffers for proximity/height of nearby development.

Question 6 - Do you agree with our preferred approach, whereby the allocation of most housing sites will be undertaken through neighbourhood plans for the towns and villages?

1. There was very strong support from local communities and PCs/NDP groups for this. This however, was tempered by strong cynicism about SODC listening to the wishes and opinions presented in Neighbourhood Development Plans.

- (a) There was a focus on 'democratic process.'
 - (b) The statutory/regulatory requirements of the Local Plan and the NDP were widely misunderstood in the presented comments. These misunderstandings included requests to include strategic sites in NDPs, the fact that housing numbers "were not evidenced" and suggesting changes to the Green Belt via NDP.
2. A number of comments, particularly from the local environs of Chalgrove, suggested that the identification of the airfield was at odds with the 'NDP devolution' approach.
 3. There was some support from the development industry/agents for the principle or "aspiration" of delivery through NDP. However, this was coupled with the need for certainty in delivery, particularly for a "significant" element of the land supply. There were calls for "more detail and strategic direction," and specific minimum numbers at the towns and larger villages.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We are directing development to the Larger Villages to support the spatial strategy and will support those Neighbourhood Development Plan group[s] who wish to promote development in the smaller villages. We need to ensure that these NDPs are progressed in accordance with the Government Regulations and that they are fit for purpose so that they are effective plans which can deliver meaningful change.

Housing numbers in the emerging Local Plan must be evidence based and must also provide a clear direction for Larger Villages. In the next stage of the Local Plan – the second Preferred Options document, levels of development will be directed to each larger village to provide clarity. In order to support those communities preparing NDPs which are inset from the Green Belt boundary, we will work with them to identify appropriate opportunities to release land where very special circumstances exist.

The identification of an opportunity for strategic allocation in the Local Plan is not intended to frustrate the aims of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and is not considered to prevent the Neighbourhood Development Plan from progressing.

The points regarding greater clarity and the direction in the Local Plan for numbers at specific villages will be addressed in the next stage of the Local Plan.

Question 7 - Do you agree with the proposed approach for the Oxford Brookes Wheatley Campus? If not, what changes do you suggest?

There were 234 responses to this question, with 179 (76.50%) agreeing and 55 (23.50%) disagreeing. There were 2 no responses

The main topics were as follows:

1. The biggest concern was that this is Green Belt land. There was a feeling that the site should remain in the Green Belt, and that as it is Green Belt that any development should be minimal and should be on the existing brownfield part

of the site rather than encroaching on the green field element, but that the brown field site should be re-used.

2. It was felt that the transport links were already in place, with access to the Park and Ride, the Oxford Tube, the airports, London and Oxford. Concern was expressed about the remaining infrastructure, especially schools, GP surgeries and local shops and how they would cope with the extra people. The issue of the villages being turned into rat runs was also raised.
3. There were comments about the red line on the plan. This goes round both green field and brown field sites and it was felt that this should be reviewed, especially in view of the Neighbourhood Development Plan being considered by Wheatley and Horton
4. The replacement of the tower was seen as a positive move, as replacing it with a lower level development would improve the Green Belt.
5. The housing mix was raised. The feeling was that a mix of housing should be provided, to cater for younger people, families and the elderly.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

Oxford Brookes University are in the process of a refurbishment project at their Headington campus in Oxford city. As part of this refurbishment, Oxford Brookes University intends to relocate the existing uses at the Wheatley campus to the Headington campus which would leave a vacant previously developed site in the Green Belt. The surrounding uses are predominantly residential and there is some scope to develop part of the site for residential development.

The existing village and built form of Wheatley is largely inset within the Green Belt. Wheatley campus is currently entirely within the Green Belt. We consider that there is potential for redevelopment for the following reasons

- The Wheatley campus site is a partially developed site in the Green Belt
 - The existing use is relocating to an alternative location in Oxford city and the site will become redundant within the plan period
 - The redevelopment of the site will provide residential development and help meet the housing needs identified
 - There is an opportunity to plan positively for its future use.
- These issues have been considered in part in the Local Green Belt Study for South Oxfordshire District council (September 2015).

The site is within single ownership and a red line would be drawn around the whole site. The site lies within the parish of Horton rather than Wheatley.

A mix of housing would be expected on this site.

Question 8 - Do you agree with our proposed approach towards the provision of affordable housing, particularly the percentage proposed and the proportional tenure split between social rented and intermediate housing and the requirement to provide on-site?

We received 145 relevant comments on this question.

1. 30 percent of comments agreed with the approach, but the remaining 70 percent either did not clearly disagree or suggested possible changes. There was also disagreement about the ratio of Affordable Housing, with the majority of the 145 respondents (40%) thinking that it was too high and 5% thinking that it was too low. There was a belief that 40% Affordable Housing is unlikely to be achieved, but that there should be a policy for smaller, starter homes and that a good mix of housing types and sizes is needed. There were also comments that the percentage of Affordable Housing should either be determined by the Neighbourhood Plan or by the location and local need. It was also commented that a lower threshold should be applied to rural areas, but that a policy on housing for older people is needed in line with Government guidance.
2. There were comments that Affordable Housing should be for local people or those living or working in Oxfordshire. There were also comments that Affordable Housing should only be located in cities and that rural areas are too isolated for Affordable Housing. Concerns were expressed that the cost of providing Affordable Housing only increases the cost of Market Housing and that Affordable Housing is often bought by people who do not need it. There were also comments that Affordable Housing would not be affordable.
3. There were comments that the respondents did not all understand what Affordable Housing was, with concerns that areas of Affordable Housing would not be nice places to live and that they should not be located near market housing. It was felt that the council should allow off-site provision of Affordable Housing or financial contributions in lieu of Affordable Housing. Several respondents requested to see the viability evidence behind the policy.
4. There were comments that the private sector should not be providing Affordable Housing and it should be left to the council to provide. It was felt that more emphasis on social housing is needed, but that Affordable Housing places too much burden on developers with small housebuilders being unable to provide it, leaving housebuilding dominated by the large housebuilders. It was suggested that Affordable Housing should be provided by a tax on developers.
5. It was also commented that that all development should provide Affordable Housing (rather than schemes of either 11 or more or 6 or more), that the problem was caused by the under occupation of housing and that the council should address this. There were also comments that there is a need for more self-build, that a ratio of 40 percent is too high for the larger schemes and that the ratio of rented Affordable Housing to shared equity should be 50 percent. It was also felt that Affordable Housing should remain in perpetuity.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

South Oxfordshire has issues in terms of affordability and the ability of people to get onto the housing ladder is constrained. The provision of affordable housing is sought on site for sites of 11 dwellings or more at 40% subject to viability.

The Council will also seek to increase the overall level of provision of affordable housing through exception sites.

The exact amount of affordable housing on each site will be agreed through negotiation between developers and South Oxfordshire District council, and the provision of 40% will be our starting position. The council's housing strategy, and where relevant local housing needs surveys, will inform these negotiations.

Self build is supported and the Council maintains a register of interested parties who wish to undertake self build. The next stage of the Local Plan will provide more detail on the expectations for land to be provided for self build plots.

Question 9 - Do you agree with our preferred amount and distribution of new employment land? If not, what changes do you suggest?

We received 99 relevant comments on this question.

1. 14 comments (14 percent) disagreed with our approach towards employment land whilst 13 comments agreed. However the remaining 73 percent made further comments on the question. It was suggested that any new employment growth should be supported by better transport links, with infrastructure matching development and supporting housing growth with employment growth.
2. Many of the comments suggested other sites as being suitable for further employment growth, for example, Culham Science Centre and Didcot, while others objected to any development at Chalgrove Airfield. It was suggested that Neighbourhood Plans should allocate employment land.
3. There were comments opposing further employment at Monument Business Park, while other comments supported it, with the feeling that brownfield sites should be developed first.
4. Concerns were raised over Britain's exit from the European Union, with concerns raised over uncertainty or economic recession.
5. Other individual comments were made objecting to any further employment land at Thame. It was also raised that there is a need for a greater number of smaller business premises and a focus on tourism related jobs in the AONB.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

The location of new employment growth needs to consider the potential needs of new, existing or expanding businesses. The Local Plan will make allocations of land for

employment land and Neighbourhood Development Plans will also contribute towards the provision of employment land. The allocation of land for employment is directed to the towns across the District and those locations with an existing strong employment presence. The development of strategic allocations for mixed use development also seeks to ensure for balanced communities.

The location and size of employment land is influenced by the needs of business and whilst the Local Plan can provide for a mix of sizes of employment land in locations with good transport links, the market will determine the take up in a way which is not experienced with residential development. Sufficient flexibility must be allowed in the provision of employment land to ensure that business needs are met over the plan period.

Employment land is being directed to Didcot and to Culham Science Centre in the emerging Local Plan. Employment development should be located at Chalgrove airfield, to provide for a mix of uses and plan for a more balanced community. The provision of employment land at Thame is to be determined through the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

At this point in time, the precise impacts of leaving the EU cannot be known, but the Local Plan is regularly reviewed and can respond to changing circumstances.

Question 10 - Do you agree with our preferred transport strategy? If not, what changes do you suggest?

There were 416 responses to this question, with 159 (38.5%) agreeing, 254 (61.5%) not agreeing.

1. In general, there was some support for the principles set out in the strategy, including locating development close to public transport corridors, and making sure new development encourages walking and cycling.
2. However, the majority of respondents to the question raised concerns regarding the proposed spatial distribution and in particular locating new development in/ close to villages and at a new strategic site at either Chalgrove or Harrington. Many respondents indicated that they felt that locating development at these locations was not in line with the strategy objectives, or in promoting sustainable transport. More specifically, the concerns regarding the Chalgrove and Harrington sites included the following:
 - Locating development at these sites is not in line with the County Council transport strategy as set out in Local Transport Plan 4, which focuses investment in public transport in and around Oxford and the Science Vale area
 - These sites do not currently have good public transport links, particularly into Oxford, and it will be difficult to provide this in the future
 - These sites are not close to employment, or where the housing need is, which is mainly identified as Oxford, which it is considered would lead to more car-based commuting

- These sites are not well located for allowing for walking and cycling provision and links
 - These sites would generate significant levels of car based traffic which would impact on surrounding roads and settlements including Stadhampton, Little Milton, Chiselhampton & Watlington
 - These sites would worsen air quality/ the environment in the surrounding area, including at Watlington
 - These sites do not link well with existing or proposed Park and Ride sites, or with rail stations
 - Significant investment in transport infrastructure and new public transport links would be needed for these sites, and the plan is not clear on what this would be and how it could be delivered
3. Many of those respondents who raise concerns regarding Chalgrove and Harrington suggest that the alternative sites as assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal would be better placed to allow for sustainable transport access. In particular Grenoble Road and Wick Farm are suggested as being better able to link with existing and proposed public transport links to Oxford, and Culham is seen as benefiting links to rail through its existing station.
4. In addition to those comments raised specifically on the strategic site, there were a number of other comments regarding transport matters. In summary these included:
- A stated requirement to deal with parking issues in certain locations, but also the perceived need to provide improved parking at certain locations, with Thame town centre, Wallingford, railway stations, and close to the M40 Junction 6 at Lewknor noted specifically
 - Reference to the need to plan appropriately for a new Thames Crossing close to Reading, including taking into account traffic impacts on South Oxfordshire
 - Concern that cuts to funding of bus services means that development in certain settlements would not be sustainable given that high quality public transport links would not be available
 - Concern that developments do not take account of equestrian needs
 - Reference to the need to improve the A34/ M40 corridors
 - Reference from Reading Borough Council to the need to provide for new Park and Ride sites
 - General concern regarding air quality/ environmental impact of new transport movements associated with development, including specific concerns in Henley, Watlington and Thame
 - Proposals to provide for electric charging points and cycle parking at stations
 - Reference to the need to improve bus services in Didcot and a proposal to provide a new parkway station out of the town centre
 - Several references from site promoters asserting that their locations were sustainably located in relation to transport access
 - Reference from the County Council to need to safeguard land for delivery of required transport infrastructure improvements in the Science Vale area, but also elsewhere were relevant- e.g. for Park and Ride sites

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan in place to support the Local Plan which considers the different types and levels of infrastructure which will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The proposed strategic and site allocations are planned to provide make a positive contribution to communities. New development can help to strengthen existing services and also to provide new infrastructure. It is considered that the emerging strategy would support rather than harm existing communities.

The mix of land uses at strategic allocation will support mixed and balanced communities and a mix of modes of transport choices will be delivered to support new development. The proposed distribution of development supports the overall strategy of the emerging Local Plan which recognises the roles of existing towns and villages, whilst also providing for major new development to strengthen the heart of the District including at Science Vale. It is not considered that this is at odds with the Local Transport Plan.

The potential for Park and Rides is set out in the County Council Local Transport Plan and we will work with the County to identify and safeguard appropriate locations for future park and ride sites. We will seek to protect other routes and strategies through the Local Plan.

Policies to address the appropriate provision of parking, rail, cycling, walking and access for all users will be included in the next version of the Local Plan. Specific strategic transport improvements will be identified and their development supported and facilitated through proposals for growth and financed in part through developer contributions.

Air Quality issues are acknowledged within the District and particular attention will be paid when considering development proposals to their individual and cumulative impact on air quality. Proposals which promote the take up of electric and/or low emission vehicles will be supported.

Question 11 - Do you agree with our proposed approach towards the provision of infrastructure? If not, what changes do you suggest?

There were 302 responses to this question, with 136 (45.6%) agreeing and 162 (54.36%) not agreeing

1. New infrastructure needs to be in place to support the large number of new developments being proposed in the Local Plan. Maintenance and funding should also be included with developments, allowing for future maintenance.
2. Policy does not mention any support for Chalgrove infrastructure. No existing rail network will mean a majority will be using cars leading to a greater use of the B480. Some commenters suggested a greater emphasis on local transport. Further to comments mentioning Chalgrove, there are a large number of people quoting 'policy does not support Chalgrove airfield' the source of this is unknown but suggests a group of commenters are collaboratively working together to push forward issues of infrastructure at Chalgrove.
3. There are mix of opinions in regards to infrastructure as respondents mention new roads and rail networks for larger villages, towns and proposed strategic sites, Harrington and Chalgrove. With regard to the proposed infrastructure policy the majority of responders would like to see better connections between villages and towns as large developments would increase demand on rural roads causing traffic.
4. Thame was the most mentioned town throughout the comments, Thame's current infrastructure cannot support more growth as a large proportion of people visit the centre which causes traffic problems. Concerns were also expressed with regard to parking problems.
5. Greater water infrastructure would be needed to supply the growing population in South Oxfordshire in the near future. Flooding is another reoccurring issue, the main concern is how the new infrastructure policy prevents the risk of flooding to areas which have previously flooded.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan in place to support the Local Plan which considers the different types and levels of infrastructure which will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts wherever they arise in the District.

We recognise that there is a settlement hierarchy within the District where smaller villages, larger villages and towns are connected to and supported by their wider

hinterland. These interdependencies are important factors in the distribution of development and provision of infrastructure.

Demand for water in the District continues to increase and it is appropriate, therefore, that new development minimises the pressure on existing resources. Measures to reduce the demand for water should be incorporated into new development. Where there is an adverse impact on water resources, including from groundwater, planning conditions and planning obligations may be imposed to mitigate the adverse effects of the development and to secure water conservation measures. The statutory sewerage and water undertaker for South Oxfordshire (currently Thames Water) and the Environment agency provide advice on the availability of water resources in the District

Question 12 - Do you agree with our approach towards retailing – the strategy and the amount of floorspace to be provided? If not, what changes would you suggest?

There were 163 responses, with 102 (65.58%) agreeing and 61 (37.42%) not agreeing.

The highest number of responses to this question said that they were happy with this aspect of the plan, but there were other issues where the individual questions received a lower level of response, but when grouped together almost reached the same number. The key areas for concern were as follows:

1. There was concern that larger retailers would move into areas and force the smaller retailers out, upsetting the balance in the market towns. It was also commented that there were already empty retail units in the area and that these should be filled first.
2. It was felt that new retail areas would increase traffic and an increased demand for parking, and that a new approach to shopping should be introduced into the towns and that this had not been considered in the plan.
3. The point was made that there would be a reduced need for retail outlets due to the rise of internet shopping, so an improvement in existing facilities should be prioritised.
4. Provision would need to be made for public transport to allow car free access to retail sites.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

Some of the responses provided to this question are beyond the scope of the Local Plan and will be determined by choice in the market and cannot be determined by the Local Plan.

South Oxfordshire published a Retail and Leisure needs assessment in 2016 which provides an assessment of retail and other town centre uses within the District's four main centres (Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford) and to forecast the need for new retail floorspace in the District over the plan period. This provides the evidence base to support the identification of new retail provision in the District. It is acknowledged that this part of our evidence base should be updated prior to the examination of the Plan, as retail need is closely related to the increase in population and should respond to this.

It is important that even in changing economic times, that our town centres are maintained and enhanced in order to remain active and vibrant so that they retain their role as service centre.

Key retail provision is provided at locations where public transport exists and the identification of retail need for the future is linked to these centres.

Question 13 - Do you agree with our approach towards retailing in Henley, Thame and Wallingford, which will be delivered by neighbourhood plans?

There were 176 responses, with 97 (55.11%) agreeing and 79 (44.89%) disagreeing.

The largest proportion of people who responded to this question agreed with the approach, but other responses had a similar theme and raised the following points:

1. The approach would radically change or destroy the character of the market towns, with retailers forced to out of town sites or on-line. Any developments must be commercially viable.
2. That there were already empty retail units, including the old Waitrose site, that should be filled or re-developed first.
3. That any plans should be realistic and based on an understanding of local shopping habits and should maintain the variety and vitality of high streets and that local residents must be listened to.
4. The approach would increase traffic congestion and the need for extra parking.
5. To be sustainable, new housing and transport links need to be introduced, along with enhanced public transport.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

South Oxfordshire published a Retail and Leisure needs assessment in 2016 which provides an assessment of retail and other town centre uses within the District's four main centres (Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford) and to forecast the need for new retail floorspace in the District over the plan period. This

provides the evidence base to support the identification of new retail provision in the District. It is acknowledged that this part of our evidence base should be updated prior to the examination of the Plan, as retail need is closely related to the increase in population and should respond to this.

It is not considered that the approach of Neighbourhood Development Plans would change the character of the market towns to their detriment. Development Plan policies cannot determine which retailers occupy specific units, but can ensure an appropriate mix of town centre uses to enhance vitality and viability. Consultation is a key part of the development plan process.

Key retail provision is provided at locations where public transport exists and the identification of retail need for the future is linked to these centres.

Question 14 - Do you agree that no further housing should be allocated to Didcot, given the amount of housing land that is already committed?

There were 220 responses to this question, with 78 (35.78%) agreeing and 140 (64.22%) disagreeing.

1. Many comments reflect that more development in Didcot would not be good for the existing residents as the infrastructure cannot support more vehicles. In the case that of the developments going forward, the upgrading of roads and the rail network for the potential new residents and also for those people travelling to and from Oxford, Newbury and London would need to be considered.
2. It was commented that the Didcot development would be the best site for expansion with high employment sites and good road networks.
3. Rail networks would also have to improve in order to assist residents travelling to work, but also with the potential increasing volume of people moving around.
4. Developers should also have better delivery rates as it was mentioned that Didcot's desired housing number has not been met and the new development housing numbers proposed in Didcot were unlikely to be met.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

The spatial strategy of the emerging Local Plan provides for major new development to be focussed at Didcot, which reflects the significant level of infrastructure, employment land and services which exist. It is recognised that much of this land where development is identified, is already allocated in the adopted Local Plan and adopted Core Strategy. Where these developments have not yet been implemented in full, the safeguarding of these allocations will be proposed.

It is accepted that delivery rates at Didcot have not progressed at the anticipated rates and that we would work with developers to ensure that any obstacles to development were removed.

Question 15 - Do you agree with our proposed approach to redevelopment at Culham Science Centre and the No.1 site? If not, what changes would you suggest?

There were 195 responses from 178 respondents. Of these, 134 agreed with the question, 59 disagreed and 2 did not express a preference.

The main topics were as follows:

1. It was felt that Culham was a good site for housing, as it is an existing brownfield site, with some comments to say that more housing should be considered as it was required to support employment growth, but also that housing should be measured against future employment growth, so less growth, fewer houses.
2. Housing was linked with employment in the comments, as Culham is an existing employment site, offering high value employment. Extra housing would make it easier to recruit and the council is supporting the creation of 1000 new jobs. It was felt that Culham is a good site to help with the development of Science Vale. The point was made that housing on a linked employment site would reduce the need for transport.
3. Transport was also raised as Culham offers links to the A34 as well as a railway station. These, especially the railway station, give good access to other employment sites, Oxford, Didcot, Abingdon, Reading and London. The railway station was seen as a very positive feature, enabling the growth of both employment and housing. It was raised that more housing would also lead to other public transport being improved, giving further access to other sites of employment and recreation.
4. While there is infrastructure in place, it was commented that more housing would lead to more traffic, so a bypass would be required for Clifton Hampden. Other infrastructure would need to be sustainable, with careful management of water and power resources.
5. There were a number of comments that Culham would be a better site than Chalgrove and a few points raised were about the need for a range of housing and social housing.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We will continue to support the redevelopment and intensification of the Culham Science centre for research and science based business. At the

adjacent “no. 1 site” we will plan for a mixed use development including the retention of employment land but with improved premises.

On land to the west of the railway there is an opportunity to provide significant development in a sustainable location. We propose development here that will have access to employment opportunities and public transport at the railway station. We envisage a community at the heart of Science Vale that can make the most of advancing technologies such as clean heat and power generation and autonomous vehicles. This development will include a variety of services and facilities to support a new community including schools and health care and will help enable the council to realise its ambitions to deliver much needed road infrastructure in the area.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

The development of land at Culham is considered to be a sustainable option to help deliver the strategy of the Local Plan and to help deliver a significant element of the housing needs. The selection of this site is proposed in addition to development at Chalgrove.

Question 16 - Do you agree with our proposed approach towards the regeneration of Berinsfield? If not, what changes would you suggest?

There were 188 responses from 172 respondents. Of these, 116 (62.03%) agreed and 71 (37.97%) disagreed.

1. It was felt that Berinsfield would benefit from regeneration, as long as not just dwellings were considered, but there was a package including infrastructure and employment, with improvements to the road network to allow improved access to other centres of employment. It was also felt that there are issues with the current housing mix, low house prices, lack of retail facilities, the lack of secondary school and a poorly performing primary school, as none of these would encourage developer interest. However, if development did happen, the whole community would benefit. There were also comments that development at Berinsfield would be more beneficial than developing a new strategic site at Chalgrove.

2. There were concerns about the infringement of the Green Belt and that building on it would set a precedent. There were comments that SODC was willing to set the Green Belt aside for Berinsfield, but not for Grenoble Road, so were not being consistent in their approach. There were also comments stating the opposite, that Berinsfield is a brownfield site in the Green Belt, that the need for regeneration should outweigh any other considerations. It was suggested that other land could be designated as Green Belt in lieu of Berinsfield.
3. It was commented that a better mix of housing was required, but that housing should be allocated to local young people and as affordable housing. Other respondents felt that less affordable housing and more market housing should be required to diversify the housing mix. Additional housing could increase the traffic in the villages and this would have to be carefully managed, but additional people would benefit the community. Any extra housing should go hand in hand with improved facilities.
4. While Berinsfield has good transport links to Oxford, Reading, Didcot and Science Vale, more employment needs to be generated locally.
5. There were comments that the plan was not detailed enough to comment properly and that SODC do not appear to have a fully thought out or developed plan.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

The expansion of Berinsfield is considered acceptable only if it will lead directly to the implementation of the masterplan for the regeneration of the village and the funding of the entire cost of the regeneration package identified by the council through the community Investment Scheme. The regeneration of Berinsfield has strong community support and seeks to achieve a unique solution which could not otherwise be realised.

The village of Berinsfield is currently entirely within the Green Belt. We propose to inset Berinsfield from the Green Belt as exceptional circumstances exist that justify this alteration to the Green Belt boundary. These are as follows:

- Areas of Berinsfield need regeneration and the current Green Belt policy is inhibiting this
- The mix of housing in Berinsfield is more unbalanced than in other parts of the District. Releasing land for development could help to rebalance the mix and provide further opportunities for employment and service provision; and
- Berinsfield is a local service centre and some further development would be consistent with the overall spatial strategy of this plan

- This location is also at a distance from the special historic setting of the city of Oxford and does not make a significant contribution towards the purposes of including land in the Green Belt to check the unrestricted sprawl of Oxford city.

It is not considered that additional land should necessarily be added to the Green Belt designation to simply 'make up' for land removed. The removal of land from the Green Belt at this location is proposed for the express purposes of regeneration. We consider that delivering both growth and regeneration together at Berinsfield promotes a sustainable pattern of development that cannot be achieved by developing elsewhere in the District.

To support this proposal, a number of studies have been undertaken by the council which indicate that Berinsfield would benefit from investment and regeneration. This is to be supported by further work commissioned by the council to explore potential options for the regeneration of Berinsfield. This further work will identify the required regeneration package and include a masterplan and delivery strategy. This is being jointly developed with the local community to provide locally required regeneration and infrastructure.

Question 17 - Do you agree with our strategies for Henley, Thame and Wallingford?

There were 197 responses to this question. Of these, 101 (51.27%) agreed and 96 (48.73%) disagreed.

The main topics were:

1. Infrastructure

Development is planned in Princes Risborough, Thame, Haddenham and Wheatley and there are concerns that the infrastructure requirements are not being addressed and that it needs to be in place to serve the growing populations. Concerns were raised that the towns would be unable to cope with the extra traffic, that more GP surgeries would be required and that the schools are already oversubscribed. It was commented that it is not only roads and schools that need to be improved, but also car parking, water and sewage. It was felt that an increase in traffic would not only affect the three towns, but also the surrounding villages. It was commented that Henley is already a bottleneck, that the roads and parking in Thame are at capacity and that the Wallingford by-pass is at capacity at peak times.

It was commented that the core-strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) addresses the infrastructure shortfall in Henley. It was felt that the infrastructure in Henley is better than that of the other towns, but no mention was made of housing growth in Henley.

There is a feeling that the Council needs to make a firm commitment to improve facilities before the developments take place.

2. Henley

There was a feeling that Henley is not being allocated as many homes as Thame and Wallingford. It was commented that the issues of AONB and the river apply to Goring as well as Henley, but that Goring has not been given a housing cap as Henley has. The Preferred Options 1 document states that large housing allocations in Henley could change the nature of the town, but the same comment can also apply to Thame and Wallingford. It was commented that Henley needs a better mix of housing to provide affordable homes and that there is an excess of care homes in the town.

3. Thame

There were many comments about the infrastructure requirements in Thame and that the infrastructure is already suffering as a result of the recent developments. This includes developments outside of Thame which rely on the facilities in Thame. Further developments at Wheatley and on the OBU site will increase the demand. There were comments to say that these should 'bed in' before any further development is considered. However, there were other comments that more affordable housing was required.

Concern was expressed that the character of Thame as a market town was being ruined and that plans for expansion at Princes Risborough and Long Haddenham risk creating a new conurbation with Thame. It was commented that development should be where demand is and that Henley is a more popular place to live and that is where the development should be.

4. Wallingford

There was concern over the facilities in Wallingford already being at capacity, with the schools and GP Surgeries full and the local roads at or near capacity, with traffic through Wallingford being a particular issue.

There were different views about the amount of housing in the town, with questions raised about why Wallingford was not being allocated more housing, despite being recognised as a sustainable location for development, but also comments that there would be 37% growth in Wallingford against 10% in Henley, with Wallingford and Thame bearing the brunt of the development. The need for affordable housing in Wallingford remains high, despite the recent development.

5. Windfall sites

There were comments about windfall sites from all of the towns. The feeling is that windfall sites need to be factored into the quota, with developers only being allowed to build the figure between the windfall number and the allocation.

6. Neighbourhood Plans

There were comments about Neighbourhood Plans with the feeling that these need to be taken into account and respected, even if SODC do not agree with

them. There were comments about Thame and Wallingford having to review their Neighbourhood Plan, but Henley not having to. There were also comments that the Neighbourhood Plans may not deliver the required housing numbers and that the designated boundaries may not allow for future development.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan in place to support the Local Plan which considers the different types and levels of infrastructure which will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts.

With specific reference to transport, a separate part of the evidence base is in relation to the assessment of impacts of proposed development on the transport network. In order to demonstrate that the impacts of increased growth have been taken into account, an Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) has been prepared to inform the emerging Local Plan. There will also be work to understand what transport mitigation might be appropriate for identified issues to ensure that proposed development does not give rise to unacceptable impacts.

New development is expected to be delivered at Henley, Thame and Wallingford through the Plan period. In each of the towns of Henley, Thame and Wallingford we propose the provision of an additional 15% growth of housing stock. This level of growth has been calculated on the basis of the housing stock existing as at 2011-the base date of the Local Plan. In previous consultations, we had considered 10% growth, but this was on top of core Strategy allocations where these existed. The market towns have already collectively delivered 5% growth from the start of the plan period and we are planning positively for further growth over the remainder of the plan period. We expect the Neighbourhood Development Plan, or review of the made Neighbourhood Development Plan, for each settlement to provide allocations for these new homes.

Ultimately windfall sites will contribute towards the level of new homes required for the district and will play a useful role in contributing towards the five year supply of housing land.

Question 18 - Should we allocate additional housing land in Henley?

1. The majority of respondents who supported further housing growth in Henley also commented that Henley should receive the same amount of development as the other towns and villages. 12 People made specific reference that Henley should be allocated the same number of housing allocations as Thame and Wallingford.
2. A number of respondents who supported housing allocations stated that affordable housing was required in Henley.

3. Another common point raised in support of further housing allocations at Henley was that development would support the economy and local retail and could reduce pressure elsewhere within the district.
4. Respondents who did support further development at Henley, also highlighted a number of key issues such as the AONB, traffic congestion, infrastructure, and protection of the character of the town, which should be considered when discussing higher density development.
5. Many of the responses received highlighted the issue of flood risk in Henley and how this would need to be taken into account with any future development.
6. Another key issue and common point raised from respondents who did not fully support further housing allocations included brownfield development only should be considered. There was very strong support for allocations being community led.
7. A number of comments received felt that further housing development would undermine the Neighbourhood Plan and that development should be community led.
8. A number of respondents requested windfall sites to be included in the housing figures.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

New development is expected to be delivered at Henley through the Plan period and we propose the provision of an additional 15% growth of housing stock as at 2011-the base date of the Local Plan. In previous consultations, we had considered 10% growth, but this was on top of core Strategy allocations where these existed. We expect the review of the made Neighbourhood Development Plan to provide allocations for these new homes.

Affordable housing provision is required in Henley, as it is elsewhere in the District and the 40% target should be applied unless there are strong viability arguments to the contrary.

Ultimately windfall sites will contribute towards the level of new homes required for the district and will play a useful role in contributing towards the five year supply of housing land.

Question 19 - Do you agree with the level of new housing provision proposed for Thame and Wallingford?

Thame

1. 58 responses were specific to Thame. A number of comments referred to windfall sites asking for further clarification as to why these are not included within the housing allocation figures.

2. A large number of residents who made specific comments about Thame, raised concerns about proposed development in the neighbouring villages of Haddenham (approx. 2 miles from Thame) and Princes Risborough (approx. 7 miles from Thame) within Aylesbury Vale district. Residents from Thame are concerned about the impact on existing infrastructure, especially combined with current and further development at Thame.
3. Many respondents placed a great emphasis on community led decision making and are concerned that the Thame Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted in July 2013 will be undermined if further allocations are included in the Local Plan. Residents feel that there is a lack of proposed infrastructure and feel that the current allocations should be implemented prior to any further allocations being provided to ensure that infrastructure is implemented successfully alongside growth. Concerns include: flooding, air quality, traffic congestion, secondary schools, primary schools, nurseries, GP surgeries, lack of parking in the town especially near the GP's surgery.
4. A large number of respondents have concerns with regard to protection of the AONB and the impact on the historic market town of Thame.
5. Nine responses supported further housing at Thame suggesting that this would support the local economy especially retail.
6. One comment stated that: sites should be allocated in LP not NDP and these should include: Thame: THA2 (Showground) and THA3 (Rugby Club)

Wallingford

8. The concerns raised for Wallingford are as follows: Wallingford is adjacent to two AONBs. Greenfield expansions could affect the setting of the AONB and the character of the River Thames corridor.
9. Respondents raised concerns about: air quality, flooding, schools & GP capacity and the impact of on the historic market town from further development.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

New development is expected to be delivered at Thame and Wallingford through the Plan period and we propose the provision of an additional 15% growth of housing stock as at 2011-the base date of the Local Plan. In previous consultations, we had considered 10% growth, but this was on top of core Strategy allocations where these existed. We expect the review of the made Neighbourhood Development Plan at Thame and the NDP at Wallingford to provide allocations for these new homes.

We are required to have an Infrastructure Delivery Plan in place to support the Local Plan which considers the different types and levels of infrastructure which will be required as a result of development planned within the District. This is an iterative process and is updated to reflect the emerging proposals, in terms of their scale, location and cumulative impacts. This considers the potential for new development at

Thame and Wallingford and will be updated to align with the next version of the Local Plan.

New development can help to strengthen existing services, such as employment and retail and also to provide new infrastructure. It is considered that the emerging strategy would support rather than harm existing communities.

The impact of new development on the AONB and on heritage assets would need to be considered as part of any proposed allocation.

Question 20 - Do you agree with the level of new employment land proposed for Thame and Wallingford?

1. There was varied support for further employment land at Thame and Wallingford. A number of responses indicated that there is support for further employment land to coincide with additional housing growth, however concerns were raised about how to ensure that residents worked locally rather than commuting out of the towns.
2. People felt that upgrading existing employment land would be more appropriate than extending employment land and that decisions should be community led through the neighbourhood plan process.
3. Further concerns were noted with regard to HGV movement, lack of infrastructure, lack office space, the impact of potential development in the neighbouring district, impact on the historic market towns and impact on the AONB.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

South Oxfordshire's Employment Land Review (2015) provides the evidence for the amount of new employment land required in the District during the Plan period. It provides recommendations as to the appropriate locations where this employment land should be provided, whether new sites or extensions to existing employment land.

Other than at Hithercroft Industrial Estate, employment land at Thame and Wallingford is expected to be allocated through the Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Whilst land can be provided for employment purposes at towns, the Local Plan cannot ensure where residents work.

Proposals which lead to the significant increase in lorry movements will be controlled through development management policy in the Local Plan.

Question 21 - Do you agree with the level of housing proposed for the rural area and its distribution between the Larger and Smaller Villages?

There was general support for the approach of ‘devolution’ to NDP, from the community, developers/agents and other statutory bodies. This support did, however, come with some caveats:

1. The most frequent response was that greater specificity was required: “One size does not fit all!” referring to the 10% *suggestion*. However, many also called for greater flexibility – this all focussed on an assessment of capacity to derive numbers.
 - (a) Generally, developers and PCs/NDP groups suggested this ‘specificity’ should come from SODC via an assessment of constraints – particularly the impact on AONB and Green Belt but also flood risk.
 - (b) Developers/agents were pushing the need for certainty in plan making (avoiding the ‘silence’ identified in the Core Strategy)
 - (c) There were some comments from members of the public that NDP should identify the housing number based on local need.
2. The second most referenced comment was that infrastructure in the villages was inadequate (roads, schools, GPs, shops etc). This was referred back to the need for specific development requirements in settlements and how these should be dictated by infrastructure capacity and the delivery of improvements.
 - (a) These sorts of comments were generally from the public and PCs/NDP groups
 - (b) The impression is given that these comments – and some about the landscape constraints – were directed at reducing the overall development figure, and that at each village but this was not explicitly stated.
3. Quite a few comments relayed an opinion that the identification of Chalgrove airfield as a development site was at odds with the approach of allowing NDP groups greater management of the process.
4. Other comments included “the overall number is too high” (from the public) “the overall number is too low” (generally from developers/agents but some public too).

Summary of SODC response to these representations

South Oxfordshire has around 140 settlements, although some are just isolated groups of houses with no community facilities. These vary considerably in size and character reflecting their natural setting and historical development. The settlements in the District have been categorised by the services and facilities they offer and a hierarchy of policies has been established on this basis. We looked at these against a range of criteria on employment opportunities,

schools, health services, recreation and leisure opportunities, shops accessibility and population to prepare a settlement assessment and hierarchy.

Villages have been categorised as being either “larger villages”, with a wide range of services and facilities in sustainable locations, and “smaller villages” that have a more limited range of services. There is a clear distinction between the villages in the settlement hierarchy though we recognise that there are interdependencies which exist at all levels.

We propose to direct development to the larger villages to support the spatial strategy and will support those neighbourhood Development Plan groups who wish to promote development in the smaller villages. In addition, there are “other villages” which lie at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy, being hamlets or very small settlements with very limited or no services. Our strategy reflects the status of settlements in this assessment.

We propose the provision of 15% growth in the larger villages. This level of growth has been calculated on the basis of the housing stock existing as at 2011-the base date of the Local Plan. In previous consultations, we had considered 10% growth, but this was on top of core Strategy allocations where these existed. The larger villages have already collectively delivered 5% growth from the start of the plan period and we are planning positively for further growth over the remainder of the plan period. This will ensure that these places continue to grow and support the services and facilities that sustain them. This 15% distribution process does not take into account of social, economic and environmental factors that may impact upon the ability of settlements to accommodate the amount of development that has been calculated. Similarly it does not take into account the availability of suitable and deliverable sites which may also impact on how much development a settlement may accommodate.

Some villages are constrained by factors such as Green Belt, areas of Outstanding natural Beauty, and flood zones. In these villages a 15% growth may not be fully achievable. Other villages are unconstrained and can plan for more than 15% growth. The level of growth proposed should be evidenced within the neighbourhood Development Plan with local communities helping to shape the development of their village.

Smaller villages, are likely to deliver 5%-10% growth, based on the number of dwellings at the 2011 census, minus completions since 2011 and outstanding commitments. The provision of 500 homes should be viewed as a minimum level of growth and will be met through small sites of 10 homes or less, and infill development, and will not be allocated by the local planning authority.

Question 22 - Should there be a “medium village” category and, if so, which villages should be included and what would be an appropriate percentage growth level for such a category?

1. There was an even split in responses for support and objection. There appeared to be confusion around the need for another level in the settlement hierarchy.
2. Not many developers/agents responded to this question unless they had a site in a ‘smaller village’ that could be “promoted” to a medium village.
3. This question was again used to call for greater detail in the development requirements at each settlement. This detail should be derived from assessments of (a) planning constraints (AONB, Green Belt and Flood risk etc.); (b) infrastructure capacity and (c) land availability. The first two points being made repeatedly by members of the public, PCs and NDP groups, the latter point by a relatively few interested developers/agents.
4. Comment that this new category was being imposed on the existing village to cover the fact that the infrastructure for more development does not exist.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

South Oxfordshire has around 140 settlements, although some are just isolated groups of houses with no community facilities. These vary considerably in size and character reflecting their natural setting and historical development. The settlements in the District have been categorised by the services and facilities they offer and a hierarchy of policies has been established on this basis. We looked at these against a range of criteria on employment opportunities, schools, health services, recreation and leisure opportunities, shops accessibility and population to prepare a settlement assessment and hierarchy.

Villages have been categorised as being either “larger villages”, with a wide range of services and facilities in sustainable locations, and “smaller villages” that have a more limited range of services. There is a clear distinction between the villages in the settlement hierarchy though we recognise that there are interdependencies which exist at all levels.

We propose to direct development to the larger villages to support the spatial strategy and will support those neighbourhood Development Plan groups who wish to promote development in the smaller villages. In addition, there are “other villages” which lie at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy, being hamlets or very small settlements with very limited or no services. Our strategy reflects the status of settlements in this assessment.

Further consideration of the middle village category would add an unnecessary tier into the settlement hierarchy. The level of development proposed at Larger Villages

and Smaller villages will be explored prior to the next stage of plan making to determine whether the levels of growth are appropriate. Below Larger Village level, the level of development would be less ambitious to reflect the level of services contained therein.

Question 23 - Do you agree with our proposed Contingency Policy to ensure delivery of housing? If not, what changes to you suggest?

This question received an even split between support and objection. There was some suspicion from the public, PCs and NDP groups that it would be used by SODC to force its will on the local communities.

Most respondents understood the need for some kind of “what if” policy. Agents and developers were in most agreement with the need for this kind of contingency to provide certainty and a fall back to create land supply.

Summary of SODC response to these representations

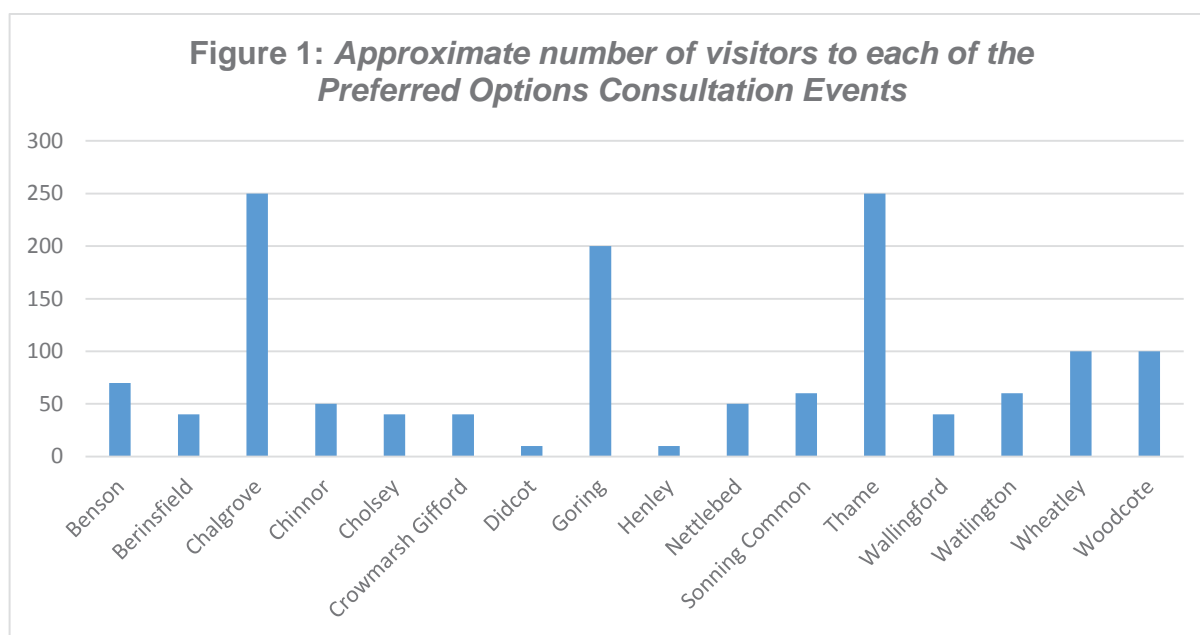
Our proposed devolution to neighbourhood Development Plans an innovative approach and we must convince an independent Inspector at the subsequent Local Plan examination that this component of the proposed housing supply is, in practice, likely to be delivered. We therefore need to have a policy in the plan that will operate as a contingency if a neighbourhood Development Plan cannot or will not allocate the required level of housing

FEEDBACK FROM THE CONSULTATION EVENTS

As outlined previously in section 4, we held a series of public events across the district in support of the Preferred Options Consultation. These consultation events aimed to:

- raise awareness of the Preferred Options Document and the consultation period
- provide an 'executive summary' of the information contained within the Preferred Options Document through the consultation boards
- facilitate verbal and written comments being made in person
- encourage visitors to download, read and comment on the Preferred Options Consultation Document and also to encourage other people in their communities to do the same
- provide an opportunity to view the document and other supporting material in person
- enable visitors to ask officers questions face to face

We received approximately 1,370 visitors in total to the public consultation events. Figure 1 shows how many people came to each of the different events. The events with the highest turnout were in Chalgrove, Goring and Thame. Events with the lowest turnouts were in Didcot and Henley-on-Thames. An average of 85 people came to each event.



Overview of the feedback received at the public consultation events

- Housing dominated conversations at most events. However, there was a clear division in opinions. Some consultees questioned the need for new homes at all, and it was suggested that the EU Referendum result necessitated the production of a new SHMA. Whilst other consultees were asking why more housing hadn't been delivered since the adoption of the Core Strategy and were particularly in

support of affordable and family sized housing. Protection of the natural and historic environment was also of high importance to many consultees

- Opposite views were expressed by consultees in regards to the preferred strategic allocation proposed at Chalgrove Airfield. Although there was some local support, visitors attending Chalgrove and other settlements within close proximity tended to view the site negatively. Whereas, in consultation events in settlements in the Green Belt, AONB, and/or located further away from the site, the redevelopment of an airfield was viewed as reasonable. However, some people were surprised to learn that both sites, Chalgrove Airfield (the preferred option, Option 1) and “Harrington” at Junction 7 on the M40 (Option 2) are not in the Green Belt or AONB.
- Consultees also regularly raised the importance of infrastructure, in particular roads, schools and GP surgeries. Many people raised concerns with current infrastructure capacity and whether more development could be supported. Whilst others viewed development as positive where it would ensure more facilities and services for the area. There was also a widely held opinion that infrastructure should be provided prior to new development.
- Neighbourhood development plans were discussed at every event. Many consultees viewed the opportunity to influence how their area grows through producing a neighbourhood development plan as positive. However some people did not see value in taking the neighbourhood planning route for their area. The need to review adopted neighbourhood development plans once the Local Plan 2032 has been adopted caused frustration and confusion to many.

Benson

- The public consultation event in Benson on Monday 11 July received about 70 visitors.
- Concerns were raised about traffic in Benson and housing being allowed on appeal in Benson

Berinsfield

- Around 40 visitors came to the public consultation event in Berinsfield on Monday 18 July.
- The most frequent comments made were in relation to the need for various improvements in Berinsfield, and the concept of regeneration and investment in the area was generally viewed as positive. Similarly, there was some support for new housing if it would improve facilities and services available in Berinsfield currently.
- The areas for improvement highlighted by visitors included:
- the skate park alongside the provision and availability of other facilities for children and teenagers

- road condition and maintenance
- public and school transport links to other settlements in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts
- affordable housing and family sized houses
- employment opportunities
- facilities and services

Some of the other concerns raised by visitors were as follows:

- in relation to the Berinsfield Neighbourhood Development Plan failing examination and subsequently not being adopted
- the amount of public consultation from both the District Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and lack of action
- the role of the Parish Council

Chalgrove

- The public event in Chalgrove on Friday 8 July was one of the best attended, receiving around 250 visitors. This is probably due to the preferred strategic allocation of Chalgrove Airfield, which is adjacent to Chalgrove and also the neighbourhood plan steering group raising awareness about the event.
- There was strong opposition at the event to the preferred strategic allocation of Chalgrove Airfield. It was frequently raised that instead development should be sited close to major areas of employment, and reference was made to the Grenoble Road site on the edge of Oxford a few times. However, not everyone locally was against the idea to the airfield.
- Several comments were also made that Chalgrove should not have to accommodate their housing allocation, which is currently being delivered through their neighbourhood development plan.
- There was also common concern around infrastructure and the need for improvements, particularly in terms of road capacity but also schools and doctors' surgeries. Visitors were worried that the infrastructure improvements necessary to support development wouldn't be delivered.
- Flooding and water run-off from the airfield into the village was also raised as an issue which may need to be addressed.
- Some comments were also made in regard to Martin Baker operations and safe distances between housing.

Chinnor

- The event in Chinnor on Tuesday 12 July received a steady attendance with around 50 visitors in total.

- The main issues raised to officers revolved around the impact of the lack of a 5 year housing land supply. This has resulted in a number of planning applications being allowed at appeal and a lack of control over where development should be sited in Chinnor.
- Several comments were also made in relation to the result of the EU Referendum and the housing need in the district. It was felt that the 'Brexit' result would negate the result of the SHMA and the need for more housing.

Cholsey

- The public consultation event was held in Cholsey on Tuesday 28 June and was attended by about 40 people.
- The most common questions posed to officers were in regards to:
 - the reasons for the additional housing need
 - the robustness and methodology of the SHMA
 - the effect of the EU Referendum on the housing need
 - how to plan for infrastructure with the uncertainty of where development will be located

Crowmarsh Gifford

- About 40 visitors came to the public consultation event in Crowmarsh Gifford on Friday 15 July.
- Officers had discussions with some visitors about the benefits of the community preparing a neighbourhood development plan.
- Concern was also raised in regard to site CRO2 (Benson Lane). It was suggested that if this site was to come forward again it should be refused planning permission as residents have fought it twice already.

Didcot

- Very few visitors came to the public exhibition in Didcot. This was perhaps due to the strategy proposed for Didcot in the Preferred Options Consultation Document being uncontentious as the majority of sites for the 15,050 homes are already allocated for development⁶.

⁶ Most of the allocated development are within Vale of White Horse District, and many already have planning consent. Of the sites within South Oxfordshire, the majority were allocated in the core Strategy.

- Residents from East Hagbourne formed the largest proportion of attendees. No objections raised to any of the sites allocated in Didcot, but transport infrastructure and drainage were raised as key issues.

Goring-on-Thames

- Around 200 visitors came to the event on Wednesday 29 June.
- Many of the residents were concerned about the impact of any new development on the two AONBs adjoining the village, as well as transport impacts, flood risk and limited capacity of the primary school.
- Some residents felt that the timing of the Local Plan could potentially undermine the neighbourhood development plan, but were supportive of the approach to devolve site allocations to this tier of planning.
- The room was shared with representatives of the neighbourhood planning group.

Henley-on-Thames

- Similarly to Didcot, the public consultation event in Henley on Saturday 23 July received very low attendance with only about 10 visitors. This is perhaps because the Preferred Options Consultation Document proposes not allocating any further homes in Henley in the Local Plan 2032. This is because of the constraints to development of the town, primarily the AONB and flood risk.
- Attendees to the event were mainly from nearby parishes, and discussed the benefits of preparing a neighbourhood development plan with officers. There was also discussion around the Thames Farm Site.

Nettlebed

- Approximately 50 visitors came to the public consultation event in Nettlebed on Friday 1 July.
- Visitors frequently referred positively to the shortlisted sites within the previous consultation document: the [Refined Options Consultation Document](#). Accompanying this, questions were raised as to why the sites are not already allocated.
- There was also a general reluctance to make a neighbourhood development plan. Visitors expressed that they felt there was no need and had little interest in wanting to pursue the option.
- Questions were also raised in regards to the development of the Sue Ryder site.

Sonning Common

- The consultation event in Sonning Common on Monday 4 July received around 60 visitors.
- Visitors were mainly interested in the Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Questions were also raised in regards to why more housing is needed, and there were some concerns about parking in the village centre.

Thame

- The Thame consultation event on Saturday 2 July was one of the busiest with about 250 visitors coming on the day.
- Consultees attending this event questioned the outputs of the SHMA and the need for additional housing. It was suggested that progress on the Local Plan 2032 should be held until the UK has exited Europe and a new SHMA has been undertaken. It was also suggested that South Oxfordshire District Council should control land values and limit house prices.
- Some visitors feel that Thame should not have to accommodate any more growth above that planned for in the [Thame Neighbourhood Development Plan](#). Other consultees felt that plans did not take into account the development that has already taken place in Thame.
- There was also concern in regards to the major development proposed nearby Thame: in Chalgrove and also in Haddenham in Aylesbury Vale District.
- Questions were raised about the development of the supermarket site.
- Consultees were also concerned about traffic, how to provide infrastructure without knowing where development will be located, and poor urban design in Thame.

Wallingford

- About 40 consultees came to the event in Wallingford on Saturday 9 July.
- As with Goring, there was support for the devolution to neighbourhood planning proposed in the consultation document. Issues around traffic were raised by many attendees but there was an acceptance that some development was beneficial for the town.

Watlington

- The public event in Watlington on Tuesday 5 July had a steady attendance with about 60 visitors in total.

- Visitors raised concerns about the proposed strategic allocation at Chalgrove Airfield and the potential impact of this major development site on Watlington, (which is near to Chalgrove). Some of the consultees viewed the site at Chalgrove as isolated and likely to be more costly in terms of infrastructure provision than some of the other potential strategic sites. People also disagreed with the Chalgrove to Oxford journey times, seeing them as unrealistic.
- Other main issues raised by visitors were in relation to traffic management in Watlington and neighbourhood planning. Consultees highlighted that people already use the village as a rat run to get onto the M40 and that this problem could be exacerbated should the airfield site in Chalgrove remain the preferred option. It was also felt that major development nearby in Chalgrove would undermine the developing Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Wheatley

- The consultation event in Wheatley on Wednesday 13 July was relatively busy with about 100 visitors in total.
- Consultees who came to this event viewed the preferred strategic allocation in Chalgrove as positive.
- There was also interest in the Oxford Brookes Wheatley Campus site and how the development could be integrated into the existing village.

Woodcote

- Around 100 visitors attended the consultation event in Woodcote on Thursday 21 July.
- Woodcote has a made neighbourhood plan which will be reviewed as the Local Plan progresses. There was a great deal of support amongst the residents of the neighbourhood plan and the steering group, who shared the village hall with their own exhibition for the event. Concerns about infrastructure and the scale of development were raised, but there were few comments about strategic sites.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 8.1 The views and information submitted through the Preferred Options Consultation were used to reform the vision and strategy put forward and to prepare a Proposed Submission Document. This document is effectively a “draft local plan”. We expect to reach this stage in Autumn 2017.
- 8.2 The plan preparation process can be seen illustrated below. A more detailed timetable for the production of development plan documents can be found in our [Local Development Scheme](#).

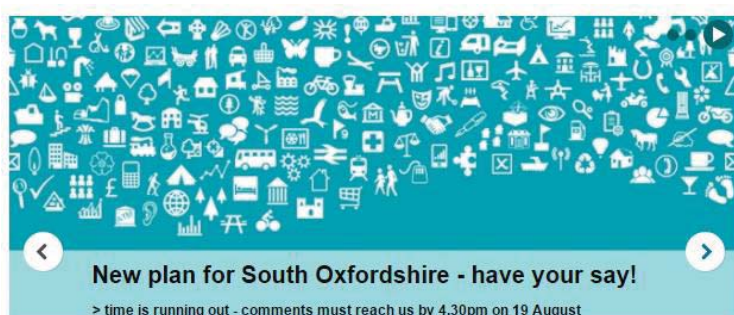


- 8.3 The representations received in consultations are used alongside a range of evidence studies to develop the emerging Local Plan. This is to provide us with a comprehensive picture of the opportunities and constraints in the district. Completed evidence studies can be accessed on the [Evidence Studies](#) page of our website.
- 8.4 Once we have prepared a Proposed Submission Document (the “draft local plan”) we will hold a public consultation period. This will allow formal representations to be made in response to the Proposed Submission Document by any interested individual or group.
- 8.5 During the consultation we will exceed the minimum required consultation methods to announce and raise awareness of the Proposed Submission Document. This will include letters and emails to all statutory consultees and also non-statutory consultees (such as residents) who have been involved in the process to date and have asked to remain informed.
- 8.6 When the consultation period has been completed on the Proposed Submission document, we will formally submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State, in the form of a formal Submission Document. It is anticipated that this will be achieved towards the end of 2017.
- 8.7 Representations received will be considered by an independent Planning Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate. Having considered all representations, the Inspector will then conduct a formal independent examination into the Local Plan. The Inspector will make recommendations in respect of the plan and, for it to proceed to adoption, the Inspector must find the Local Plan to be “sound.” It is anticipated that the examination is likely to be conducted in the Spring of 2018.
- 8.8 Once a local plan is found to be “sound”, it can proceed to adoption. In the case of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2033, this is expected to be mid/late 2018.

APPENDIX 1

This appendix contains a copy of the information shown on the council website during the Preferred Options Consultation.

A banner (as shown below) was displayed on the council's homepage to draw visitors' attention to the consultation. This banner also provided a hyperlink to the Local Plan 2032 'homepage', where information about the Preferred Options consultation was located.



Information about the Preferred Options consultation was provided at the following web address: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2032> . This page is used as the 'homepage' for the Local Plan 2032 and so we update the content regularly. A copy of the information displayed on this webpage during the Preferred Options Consultation can be found below and continued overleaf.



Listening Learning Leading

###

Local Plan 2032

The New Local Plan – Preferred Options Consultation




Have your say on the new South Oxfordshire Local Plan

South Oxfordshire District Council is continuing work on a new Local Plan which will shape the future of our District. We are committed to involving our communities in preparing the new plan, and we would now like your views on our latest Preferred Options.

The Local Plan 2032 will set out how development will be planned and delivered across South Oxfordshire to 2032. The policies in the plan will be used to help make decisions on planning applications in the district.

We began work on the new Local Plan in 2014 and have already undertaken two consultations. This current consultation is your chance to help shape this process. Local knowledge and an appreciation of what residents and local businesses want is important in plan making, so your views count.

Consultation documents

Preferred Options Consultation document (8.5 MB) 
Sustainability Appraisal (5.4 MB)  and Appendices (3.6 MB) 

The consultation closes on 19 August 2016 at 4:30pm.

Please be aware that all comments will be publically available to read after the event has closed and the responses have been processed.

How to comment

Registering and responding via our online consultation system is the most efficient way to submit your comments and we encourage you to use this method.

View the document on our on-line consultation system - you will need to login or register to submit comments

Guide on how to register for the Consultation Portal (582.1 KB) 

If you are unable to use the online consultation system you can also respond via email or post using the form below.

Consultation form (122.0 KB) 

Email us at: planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk – please put 'Local Plan' as the email subject

Send your response by post to: Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton OX14 4SB

View the documents

Paper copies of the Preferred Options document are available to view at:

Abbey Sports Centre, Berinsfield (reception)
All libraries across the district
Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot
Culham Science Centre (reception)
Didcot Wave Leisure Pool and Gym (reception)
The council's offices at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB during normal office opening hours

Purchase the documents

Paper copies of the consultation documents are available to purchase. Please contact [Planning Policy](#) for further details.

Public events (finished)

We held a series of public events where the consultation documents and information boards were available to view. Council staff were present to answer questions and record feedback.

Public events were held at the following locations:

Benson – Monday 11 July 3-7pm, Benson Parish Hall (The Lounge), Sunnyside, Benson, OX10 6LZ
Berinsfield - Monday 18 July 3-7pm, Berinsfield Pavilion, Lay Avenue, Berinsfield OX10 7NX
Chalgrove – Friday 8 July 3-7pm, Chalgrove Village Hall, Baronshurst Drive, Chalgrove, OX44 7TE
Chinnor - Tuesday 12 July 3-7pm, Chinnor Village Hall, Church Road, Chinnor, OX39 4PQ
Cholsey - Tuesday 28 June 2.30-6.30pm, Cholsey Pavilion Station Road, Cholsey, Wallingford, OX10 9PT
Crowmarsh Gifford - Friday 15 July 3-7pm, Crowmarsh Village Hall, 6 Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford, OX10 8ED
Didcot - Saturday 16 July 11-3pm, Cornerstone Arts Centre (Flint Room), 25 Station Rd, Didcot OX11 7NE
Goring-on-Thames - Wednesday 29 June 3-7pm, Goring-on-Thames Village Hall, High Street, Goring-on-Thames, RG8 9AG
Henley-on-Thames - Saturday 23 July 11-3pm, d:Two Centre, 55-57 Market Place, Henley, RG9 2AA
Nettlebed - Friday 1 July 3-7pm, Nettlebed Village Club, High St, Nettlebed, RG9 5DD
Sonning Common - Monday 4 July 3-7pm, Sonning Common Village Hall, Wood Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9SL
Thame - Saturday 2 July 11-3pm, Thame Town Hall, High St, Thame OX9 3DP
Wallingford - Saturday 9 July 11-3pm, The George Hotel, High St, Wallingford OX10 0BS
Watlington - Tuesday 5 July 2.30-6.30pm, The Watlington Club, 20 High St, Watlington, OX49 5PY
Wheatley - Wednesday 13 July 3-7pm, Merry Bells Village Hall, Wheatley, OX33 1XP
Woodcote – Thursday 21 July 3-7pm, Woodcote Village Hall, Reading Road, Woodcote, RG8 0QY

What happens next?

After this consultation, we will gather your responses and decide whether to revise our preferred options. Following this we have the option of further consultations to gather your views, or to move to the next stage of preparation where we will publish the version of our Local Plan that we intend to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination, to enable representations to come forward that can be considered at examination.

Last reviewed: 09 - 08 - 2016

APPENDIX 2

This appendix shows a copy of the information boards used at the public consultation events.

South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS

What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan identifies how to plan, deliver and manage growth and protect the natural and built environment. It sets out the policies used to decide planning applications.

- Our existing plan needs updating as new evidence has been published
- We are required by law to keep our plan up-to-date
- We are preparing a new local plan to run until 2032

We are preparing a new Local Plan

Our new Local Plan 2032 will:

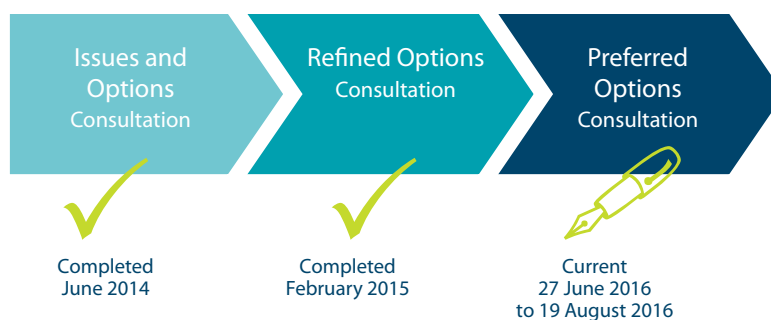
- Set our vision for South Oxfordshire
- Involve the local community through neighbourhood planning
- Identify the new housing, employment land, and retail space we need
- Identify the infrastructure needed to support this growth (such as new roads, schools, doctor's surgeries and sewerage)
- Set out the policies to make decisions on planning applications

The Plan Preparation Process



Why does it take so long?

- We want to ensure that everyone has their say
- We want to consult everyone through each stage
- We have to follow Government regulations



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South Oxfordshire

South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS

What is a 'preferred options' consultation?

The preferred options document sets out the general principles on:

- Housing
- Employment
- Retail
- Transport
- Infrastructure

The preferred options set out our principles and direction of travel for growth in South Oxfordshire.

- We are at **stage three** of our plan making process.
- We have gathered your views and amended our preferred strategy.
- We previously received nearly 7,000 comments.
- Our preferred options are **not a final version** of our Local Plan.
- **We need your views on our preferred options.**

What do I need to do?



What happens next?



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South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS



Why do we need more homes?

The government has asked us to help ensure there are enough new homes for everyone in the district.

In 2014, together with Oxford City and the Oxfordshire Districts, we undertook a study to calculate how many new homes are needed in Oxfordshire. The study is called a Strategic Housing Market Assessment or SHMA.

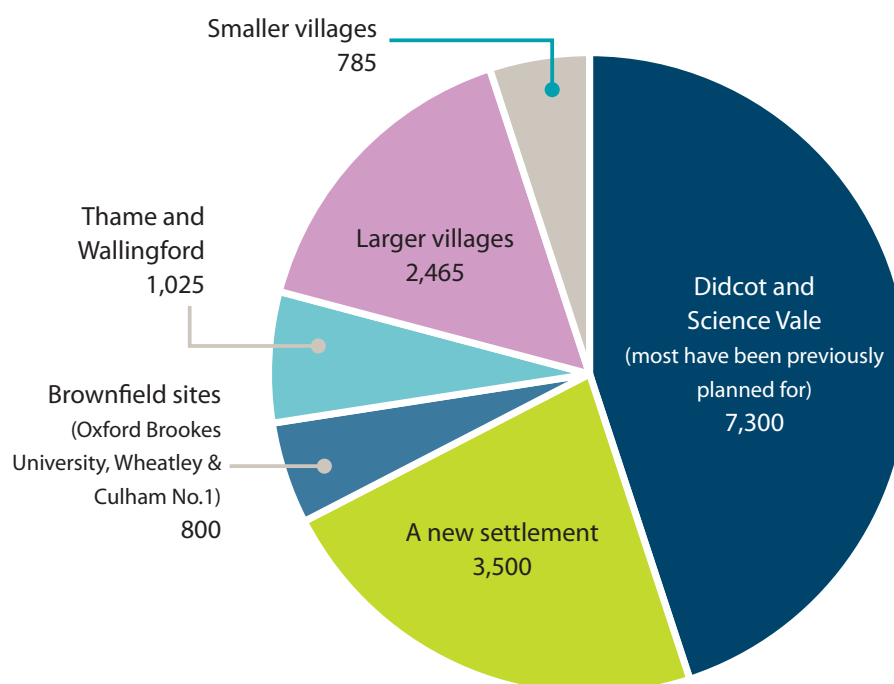
Key findings:

- South Oxfordshire needs to plan for between **14,500 and 16,500** homes from 2011 to 2031 (between **15,225 and 17,325** new homes from 2011 and 2032)
- Oxford City may not be able to fit all the new homes they need within the city boundary - we have a duty to cooperate to meet some of this need

Our preferred plan

- We plan to focus development in the most 'sustainable' locations
- We want to protect our Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- We need to ensure that we avoid floodplains and protect the natural and built environment

- 15,750 new homes for South Oxfordshire's needs from 2011 to 2032 (750 per year)
- 3,750 new homes for Oxford City's needs from 2011 to 2032 (179 per year)
- Around 11,500 of these homes have already been built, or are already planned.



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South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

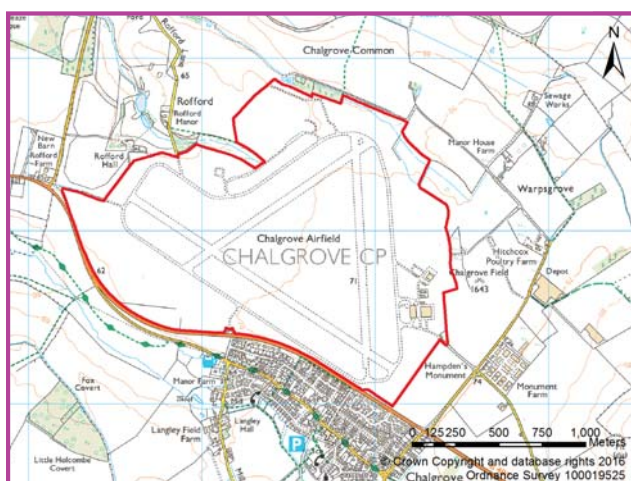
PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS



Where will new development go?

Neighbourhood Planning

- We believe that local people have valuable knowledge, and we would like you to have a greater say on where new development will go.
- This can be achieved through neighbourhood planning and we believe they are the best way to deliver most development across our district.



A new settlement

The Government advises that new homes can sometimes be best achieved through larger scale development, such as a new settlement, so we prefer this option.

We want to protect our Green Belt and the setting of Oxford so we prefer that a new settlement outside of the Green Belt.

Our preferred option is a new settlement of 3,500 new homes on Chalgrove Airfield. We will ensure that the right infrastructure is in place to serve these new homes.

New Retail

- More food and more non-food retail floor space is planned.
- It will meet the needs of local people and visitors and keep our towns thriving.
- Neighbourhood Development Plans will plan for this.



New Employment

Our evidence shows that we will need around 26 hectares of additional land for employment up to 2032.

- The Vale of White Horse District Council will help us with 6.5ha of this.
- The equivalent of 5.3ha will go at the existing centre at Culham Science Centre.
- The location of most of the rest will be decided by the Neighbourhood Development Plans.

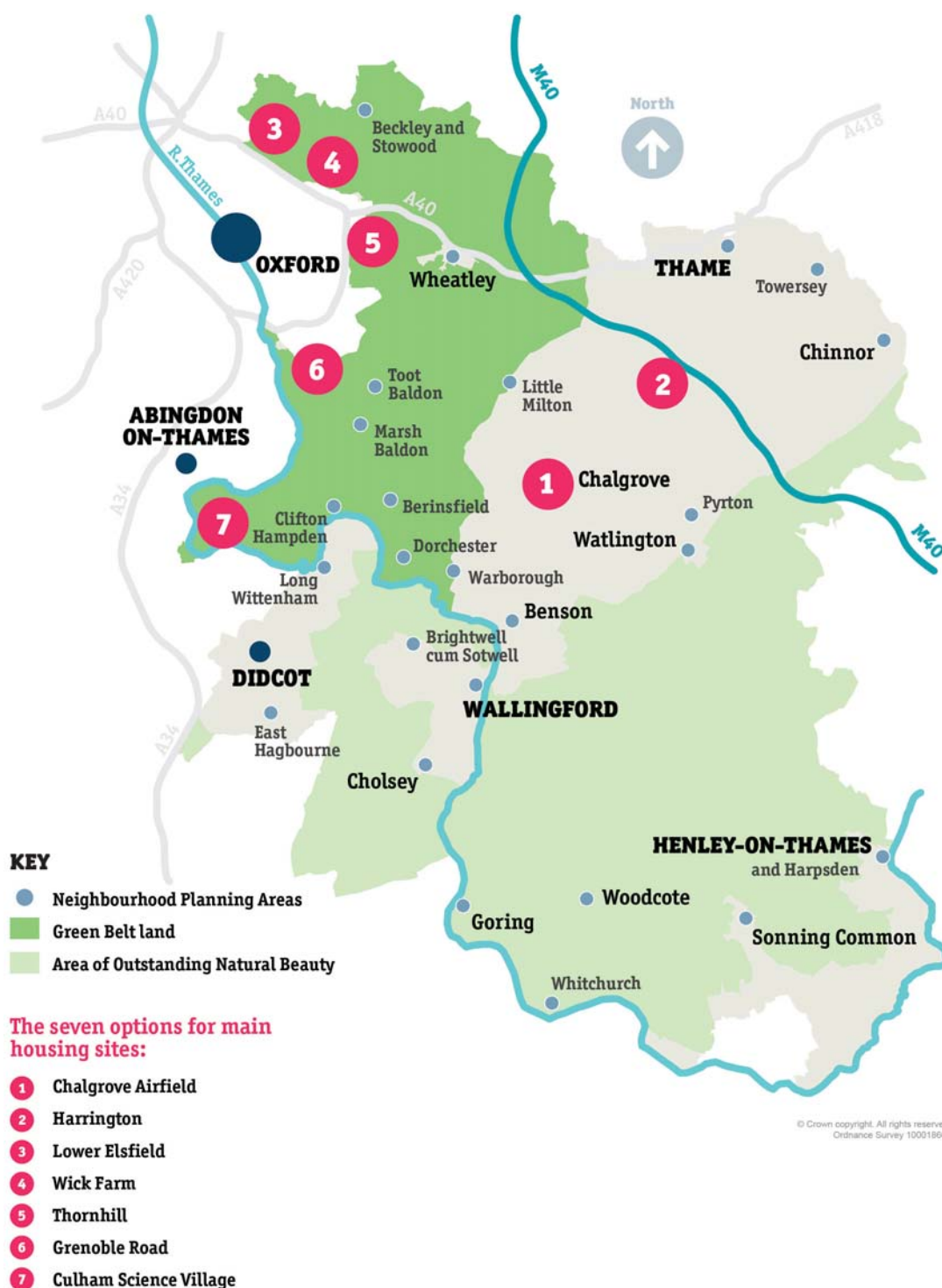
New Infrastructure

- We will plan for sufficient new infrastructure to serve the new development.
- We need to ensure that this is in place at the right time.
- We will seek funding from developers to meet the cost.
- We will produce a detailed **Infrastructure Delivery Plan** at the end of this year.
- Neighbourhood Development Plans will also provide evidence on what is required.

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South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS



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South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS

- Neighbourhood Plans can plan where development will go.
- They can help define how much housing can be provided.

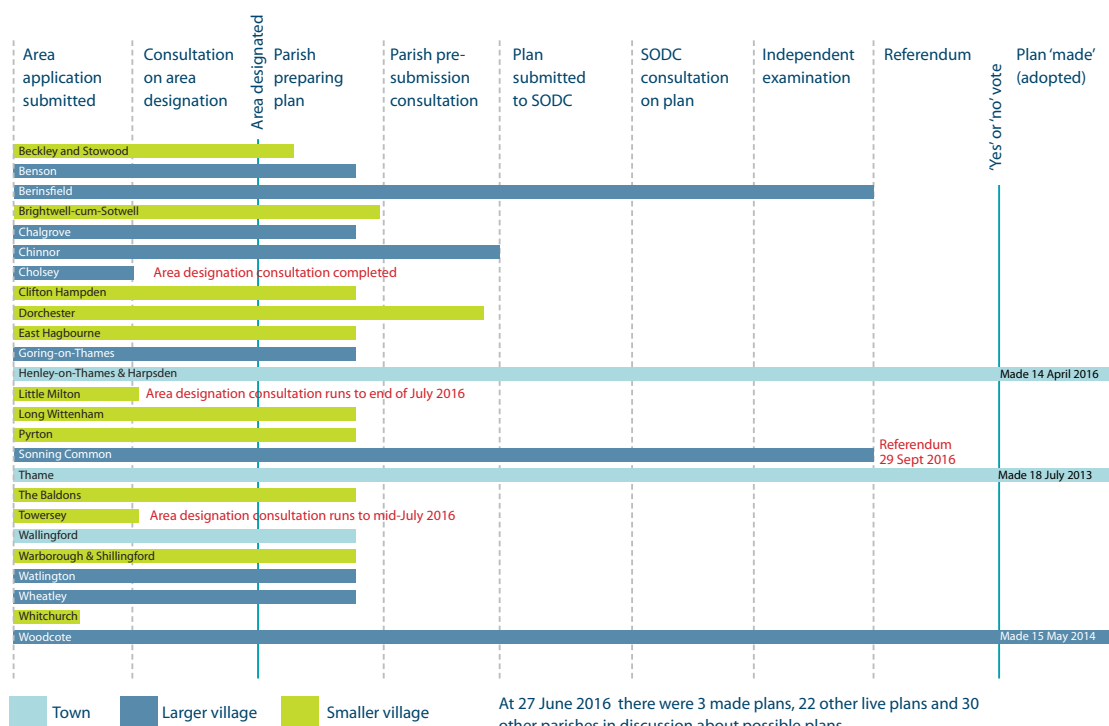
Neighbourhood Planning

This consultation proposes how much growth is needed up to 2032 and our preferred option is to deliver this growth through our network of towns and villages.

We consider that neighbourhood planning is the most appropriate way to plan where new homes, employment, infrastructure and facilities can go.

A number of towns and villages are already taking up this opportunity.

Neighbourhood plan progress across South Oxfordshire District



We will help neighbourhood planning groups to prepare plans that:

- recognise opportunities and constraints
- are based on sound evidence of the area's capacity
- provide for the appropriate amount of development
- are in line with National Policy and our new Local Plan 2032

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South Oxfordshire LOCAL PLAN 2032

PREFERRED OPTIONS STAGE THREE OF THE PROCESS



Have your say by
19 August 2016

YOUR
VIEW

How do I have my say?



Registering and responding via our online consultation system is the most efficient way of responding to the consultation and we encourage you to use this method.



You can comment on-line by registering on our website

www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan



You may also:

Email us at: planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk
– please put 'Local Plan' as the email subject



Post your comments to: 'Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton OX14 4SB'



How do I find out more?

You can view the Preferred Options for the Local Plan 2032 on our website: www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan

Paper copies of the Preferred Options document will be available to view at:

- Public libraries across the district
- Abbey Sports Centre, Berinsfield
- Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot
- Culham Science Centre
- Didcot Wave Leisure Pool and Gym
- The council's offices at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB

Please remember that all comments received will be available to the public to view.



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